



Menstrual Hygiene Management in Schools and Communities in Nigeria



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Thematic Area: Approaches to Addressing MHM for Girls

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Outline

- Introduction
- Myths around menstruation
- Major Interventions
- Major MHM activities
- Way forward
- Conclusion

Introduction

- Menstruation is generally perceived by most people especially in rural areas as unclean, filthy, dirty and shameful.
- Based on these general perception, information on menstruation and menstrual hygiene are often treated with a lot of secrecy and embarrassment.
- Some of these perceptions were confirmed as part of findings of studies on menstruation and menstrual hygiene conducted in some parts of the country

Some myths Around Menstruation

The following are some myths based on information obtained during Menstrual Hygiene Promotion in schools and communities; and studies on MHM;

- A man must neither sleep in the same room with his wife nor eat her food during her menstrual period.
- Washing her menstrual rag (pad) daily or disposing of the rag can expose a woman to witchcraft attack.

Major Interventions

- Studies and Surveys were conducted in some parts of the country for better understanding of issues around menstruation and menstrual hygiene.
- The survey in schools targeted adolescent girls to determine what improvements the girls wanted to see in the school latrines for effective menstrual hygiene.
- The community study was broader and involved focus group discussions with adult women and men; young females and males; and girls of age ranging from 13-45 years.

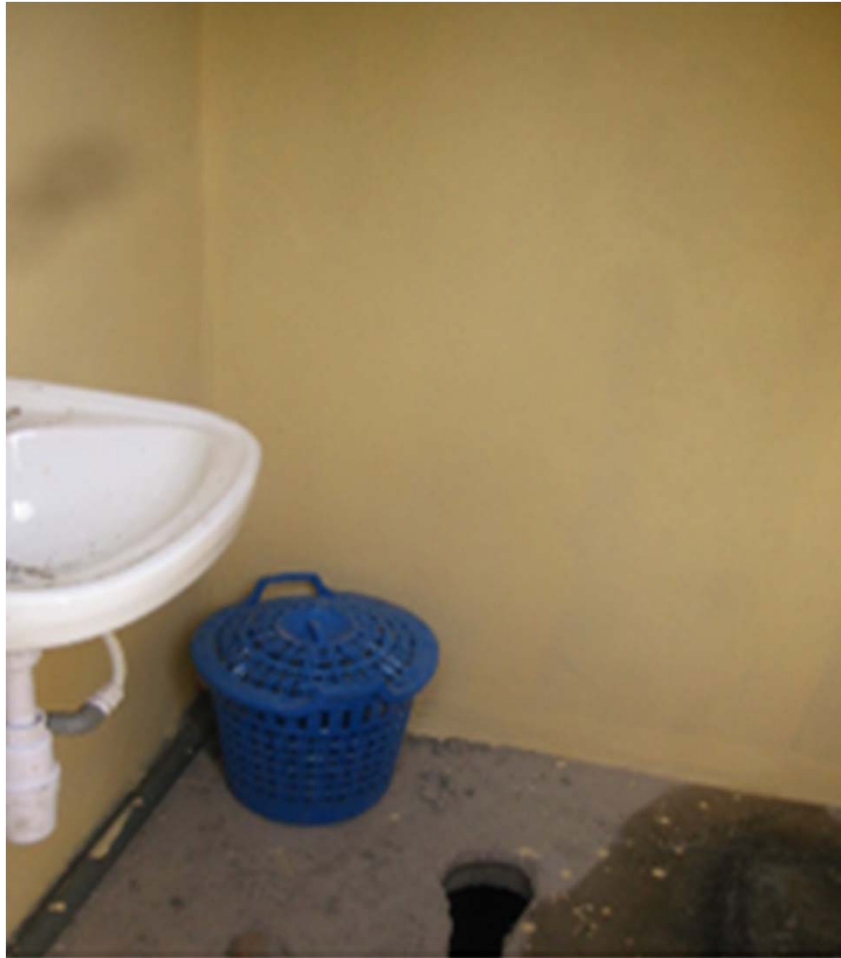
Major Interventions

- Based on the findings of the survey/study, the following modification was made to school latrine designs;
 - One of the latrine rooms for girls is equipped with wash hand basin, water, mirror and waste bin.
- The modified latrines for adolescent girls have been provided in 150 schools across the country.

Generic design



Adaptations to accommodate MHM



One compartment per block was modified for menstruating girls to meet their hygiene and sanitation needs i.e. changing room provided , with squat hole, wash hand basin, soap dish and sanitary bin

Hand wash piping design modified to ensure wash hand basin has water at all times.

Adaptations contd.



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- A full length mirror is also provided in the specific room earmarked for menstruating girls so the girls can check themselves and leave confident that they are not stained.
- Preliminary findings have not indicated any form of fear or stigmatization in the use of this room by menstruating girls.

Major MHM Activities

- Sustained sensitization of Adolescent girls on Menstrual Hygiene.
- Incorporation of modified latrine designs for Menstrual Hygiene management in the National Guidelines for construction of School Sanitation Facilities.
- Sustained advocacy for scaling up the modified latrines designs for Menstrual Hygiene Management in schools in the country.

Major MHM Activities

- Incorporation of Menstrual Hygiene Management as a module in the Hygiene Promotion Manual and efforts are on-going towards developing a separate Menstrual hygiene management manual.
- Development of Action Plan by School Based Management Committees for provision of Sanitary Pads for adolescent girls in 90 pilot Schools under DFID funded WASH programme.

Major MHM Activities.

- Training of State and Local Government Hygiene Promoters on Menstrual Hygiene Management.
- Sensitization of women on Menstrual Hygiene Management as part of post-triggering activities during implementation of Community Led Total Sanitation.

Way Forward

- Continue advocacy with Government and other relevant stakeholders to prioritize MHM as part of the WASH in schools project.
- Learn from the experience in incorporating MHM into CLTS for possible scaling up.
- Engage the grandmothers & Nursing mothers as “advocates” to reach school girls & teachers.
- Sometime in future we need to carry out a study to generate evidence on the impact of integrating MHM in the WASH in Schools projects.

Conclusion

- MHM is an integral part of WASH interventions in schools and communities.
- Lessons arising from WASH project implementation in schools and communities demonstrate that leaving it out makes hygiene promotion incomplete.
- Through Community Orientation, Menstrual hygiene is demystified & discussing in schools has become more acceptable.
- It should not be seen as an additional package but rather mainstreamed into the existing promotional activities for total sanitation and hygiene.

Thank you